



RESPECTING EACH OTHER

by Rabbi Adam Zeff

Each day between Pesah and Shavuot we count the Omer, numbering the days between freedom and revelation. Although this is a time of anticipation, as we look toward the giving of Torah that we celebrate on Shavuot, it is also traditionally a time

of semi-mourning. Many people do not plan joyous events such as weddings during this period, and even concerts or other celebrations are often deferred. The exception is the 33rd day of the counting, Lag ba'Omer, when the semi-mourning is lifted and many weddings and other occasions are celebrated. Why would the time of the Omer counting be one where joy is restrained, and why would that restraint be lifted on Lag ba'Omer?

As with most questions in Jewish tradition, this one has many different answers. But given what is happening in the world around us, in the political world of Israel as well as that of the United States and elsewhere, I am most interested in the answer that tells a story about disrespect and its consequences.

Rabbi Akiva was one of the greatest of the sages, and he taught innumerable students. In the Talmud (Yevamot 61b), the story is told that during the counting of the Omer, 12,000 pairs of Rabbi Akiva's students perished in one day. How could this have happened? First, it is important to understand that these 12,000 pairs of students were study partners, studying in *hevruta*, in pairs, to try to understand Torah better. The essence of *hevruta* study is disagreement. Indeed, it is usually recommended that one choose as a study partner someone who does NOT share your perspective on the world. As you bump up against each other's points of view, you create sparks that lead to learning, illuminating the Torah. But in order for disagreement to lead to insight, it must always be rooted in respect for your partner, no matter how differently you may see things. Respect is the container that makes the back and forth of study and argument productive rather than destructive.

The Talmud relates that, sadly, these 12,000 pairs of students had somehow forgotten what was essential to their relationship. Rather than treating each other as respected partners whose

different views could lead them to greater insight into the divine, they started to view each other simply as opponents. Winning the argument became more important than learning. The person who disagreed was no longer simply taking a different perspective; they were wrong with a capital W. This loss of respect was not just a shame; it was literally fatal to these students. All of their potential to learn, to bring light to the world, was lost. So the period of the Omer became a time of semi-mourning to mark these deaths and to serve as a warning to future generations about the importance of respecting those with whom we disagree and the destructive potential that disagreement without respect holds, for ourselves and for our world.

Unfortunately, we see in our current moment that such lessons seem not to have been learned. With very occasional exceptions, we see disagreements on a wide range of issues take on the character of all-out war, with each side caricaturing the other and removing all nuance and shades of gray from our discourse. Far from respecting those with whom we disagree, we treat them as enemies, irrational, almost inhuman. Is it any wonder, as in the story of Rabbi Akiva, that the result is a destructive, caustic public sphere that seems only to cause harm, a civil society that produces only heat but no light?

The Talmud, though, offers us some hope. Although a plague raged among the students, it did not rage forever. On Lag ba'Omer, it stopped. Somehow, some way, the students who remained managed to recover their senses, to regain their respect for each other, and to strive for civil discourse in the name of the greater good. Slowly, their wounds healed, and the tradition that Rabbi Akiva taught was not lost.

Their story comes down to us as a lesson and as a warning. If we can only see each other as opponents, and winning is the only thing that matters, then destruction is inevitable. But if we can see each other with respect, if we can actually seek out those with different perspectives so that we can learn from them, if we can focus on the true goal of bettering ourselves and all humanity, then there is hope—for greater light, for more Torah, for greater peace, and for a brighter future for all. *Ken y'hi ratzon*—so may this be God's will.



MAZAL TOV! IN CELEBRATION OF...

Sylvia Lifschitz & Mitch Hirsch, on the birth of their granddaughter, Rachel Liora, daughter of Josh & Stacey Hirsch, and sister of Aaron

Ellen Ufberg and Judah Labovitz, on their wedding



WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Rebecca Stern

PLANNED GIVING & NER TAMID



Remembering Germantown Jewish Centre in your will, a trust, or retirement asset is a meaningful way to ensure that your commitment to our community continues to help our synagogue thrive for generations to come. For more information on how you can include GJC in your estate plans, please contact Nina Peskin at 215-844-1507 x12.

IN MEMORIAM

Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish, mother of Emily, step-mother of Andrew and Rachel, and grandmother of Zoe, Sadie, and Ramona

Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston, mother-in-law of Hillary Kruger, and grandmother of Ivan, Miranda, and Serena

Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin, and great-grandfather of Maya

David Wundohl, brother of Barbara Pearson

Bernard Goodman, father-in-law of Pearl Raz

Cherie Goren, very longtime member of Germantown Jewish Centre

Dr. Richard Braun, father of Sarah Braun, father-in-law of Shai Gluskin, and grandfather of Sophia and Gabriel

THANK YOU

Germantown Jewish Centre
extends thanks and gratitude to the

Wolfe Family Foundation

for generously supporting and making
our programming possible.

THANK YOU TEEN LEYNERs

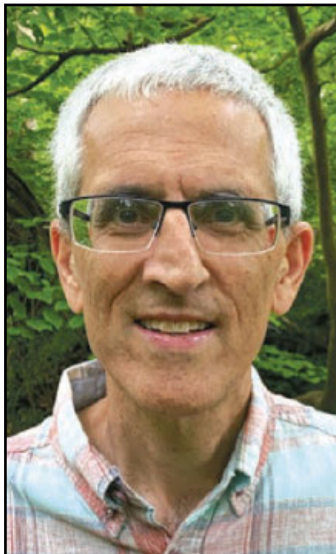
Kol HaKavod to teens who have *leyned* in the Charry Service and in Dorshei Derekh so far in 5783!
You are role models for us all.

Elijah Barkan
Mikaela Kessler
Nami Janus Lieberman
Oren Rossos
Dasi Weinmartin

Levanah Cohen
Oliver Kraut
Jared Nachimson
Jonah Smith Posner
Yehudah Weinmartin

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by David Mosenkis



One of the seven values highlighted in GJC's Values Statement is:

Torah – We take joy in the study of Jewish texts from across Jewish history, and we celebrate the full range of Jewish arts and culture. We share a commitment to educating and inspiring the next generation. We treasure what we have inherited, and we innovate as we forge our unique link in the chain of Jewish tradition.

Education has always been a top priority at GJC. When the early leaders of GJC were planning for the construction of the building in 1945, they decided to build the current school building first, followed several years later by the part of the building that includes the Charry Sanctuary and Marcus Auditorium. The initial school building included ten religious school classrooms plus a kindergarten room.

Today the education of children at GJC is thriving. Our Early Childhood Program has expanded to its largest size ever, with 125 children currently enrolled. Our Religious School has also experienced growth and garnered much praise from families in recent years, under the inspiring leadership of Youth and Families Director Abby Weinberg. This year there are 93 children enrolled in our Religious School and teen education programs. Our child education programs are not just serving important needs of our members; they have also been the leading entry points for new members in recent years. Of the 82 new families who have joined GJC in the last four years, 21 named the Religious School and 13 named the Early Childhood Program as their main reason for joining.

We also have diverse and compelling learning opportunities for adults. Founded by former Assistant Rabbi Bec Richman, and now run by Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti, Koleinu Beit Midrash offers one-time and continuing classes taught by Rabbi Zeff and an array of other talented teachers from among our members and beyond. Topics this year have included Torah study, ritual skills

like reading Torah and wrapping Tefillin, the future of Jewish peoplehood, learning to read Hebrew, reimagining Mikveh, and many others.

This emphasis on education, especially of children, has deep roots in Jewish tradition. The opening chapter of Pirkei Avot quotes Hillel as saying, "One who does not increase their knowledge decreases it." The mandate to educate children is even stronger. The Talmud expresses this value in aphorisms like "One who teaches a child, it is as if they had created that child" [Sanhedrin, 19B], and "Jerusalem was only destroyed because her school children were neglected" [Shabbat 119B]. On a more concrete level, the Talmud goes so far as to declare the level of resources that a community must devote to educating its children: "The number of students to be assigned to each teacher is twenty-five. If there are fifty, we appoint two teachers. If there are forty, we appoint an assistant, at the expense of the town" [Baba Batra 21A].

GJC members' commitment to educating children extends beyond the walls of the building, and indeed beyond Jewish learning. We count many teachers and other education professionals among our members. When 50 members were asked 10 years ago about the issues of most concern to them, by far the most common response was public schools. Some were worried about quality schools for their own children, while others were concerned that good local public schools are important not only for society at large, but for GJC to continue to attract new members to the neighborhood. That interest was part of the impetus for GJC to join POWER Interfaith, and for GJC members to be leaders and active participants in POWER's campaign for equitable public school funding. That campaign has highlighted and worked to eliminate the systemic racial bias in Pennsylvania's public school funding, which shortchanges the city of Philadelphia by hundreds of millions of dollars each year. The campaign celebrated a major milestone this year when the Commonwealth Court ruled that Pennsylvania's current system of public school funding is unconstitutional.

As we approach the holiday of Shavuot, when GJC will celebrate the giving of Torah with study sessions late into the night, I invite you to join me in celebrating and participating in the bounty of learning opportunities available in our community.

GJC THANKS OUR NEDIV LEV AND ROSH PINAH MEMBERS

"A gift from generous hearts"
(Exodus 25:2)

Within the GJC community, we are fortunate to have a growing number of extraordinarily generous members who give \$10,000 or more to the Centre annually, providing a backbone to GJC. This group of donors who belong to the Nediv Lev (generous of heart) giving circle enable the *shul* to serve our community, and their commitment enables the *shul* to provide for the needs of all our members. We especially thank the Nediv Lev circle below for helping Germantown Jewish Centre to continue to offer the highest possible level of education, religious, and social programming:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Marcy & Dan Bacine | Chris & Steve Levin |
| Jane & Richard Baron | Tamar & Sam Magdovitz |
| Eileen & Richard Bazelon | Barbara & Dick Menin |
| Peninah & Albert Berdugo | Sandy & Jim Meyer |
| Harold Berger | Elise Singer & Don Perelman |
| Sarah Braun & Rabbi Shai Gluskin | Martha & Chuck Schleifer |
| Barbara Jaffe & Howard Langer | Allyson & David Schwartz |
| Connie & Sam Katz | Denise Scott Brown |
| Myra Kranzel | Dveera Segal & Brad Bridge |
| Jake Kriger | Patty & Steve Segal |

Thank you also to our Nediv Lev member who would like to remain anonymous.

* * * * *

"The humblest of stones has become the chief cornerstone."
['Rosh Pinah'] (Psalm 118:22)

GJC expresses its deep gratitude for the generous support of those congregants who have chosen the Rosh Pinah (Cornerstone) level of membership. Their contributions provide crucial support, enabling us to serve the entire GJC community. We cannot adequately thank the following members for their commitment to Germantown Jewish Centre:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Louie Asher | Dayle Friedman & David Ferleger | Steven Peitzman |
| Marta & Chip Becker | The Hahn & Weiss Family | Beth Rosenbaum & Noel Eisenstat |
| Michael Beer | Myra Jacobsohn | Rina & Ivan Rosenberg |
| Evelyn Eskin & David Major | Hillary & Judd Kruger Levingston | Beth Stearman |
| Rachel Falkove | Katie & Geof Margo | Betsy & David Teutsch |
| Helen & Michael Feinberg | | Joyce & Erik Videlock |

For information on joining one of these giving circles, please contact Nina Peskin at director@germantownjewishcentre.org.

FINDING FAMILY

by Yona Diamond Dansky

My father's family is from Ukraine, and my grandfather, Boris (Baruch) Diamond, my father's father, came to the US from a small town, Verkhnedneprovsk, which is close to the city of Dnipropetrovsk.

When it was no longer safe for Jews to remain in Ukraine because of anti-Jewish pogroms and blood libel cases (accusations of Jews murdering Christians for ritual purposes), Baruch and his siblings all scattered to other places they considered safer. He left his whole family, and never saw them again. He was one of seven siblings, and he was the only one who came here, arriving in May of 1914 at the age of 24. He settled in Philadelphia.

Baruch told stories about being together with other immigrants in dwellings that had coin-operated heat. Sometimes they did not have a coin (perhaps a quarter) to turn on the heat, so they sat in the cold and sang songs they remembered from their life in Ukraine.

He later married our grandmother, Lena Gottlieb, who was also from the same town—after they became reacquainted here in the United States. Lena came here with her older brother, Isidor, and settled in Philadelphia in 1913. They were both tailors. Later my grandfather managed a candy store. They had three children, my father, Willy, my Aunt Jody (Rose) and another child, Evelyn, who died as a baby.

My father remembered that as a child he saw letters that were sent to his father (Baruch) from Baku, Azerbaijan, where two of Baruch's siblings had gone.

Since we knew about the Baku families, over the years we wondered where they were, and who they were. My husband Howard and I even traveled to Azerbaijan to look for them in 2018 but found no trace. Then, seemingly out of the blue, my long-lost second cousin Gregory (from Baku, Azerbaijan) called from NYC, where he and his mother and sister had been living since the mid-1990s. They had been looking for our family, as we had been looking and wondering about theirs. When Gregory joined 23 & Me, he found us!

Gregory's mother, Sofia Diment, is my father's first cousin. Sofia's father, Grisha Diment is buried in Tbilisi, Georgia, near Azerbaijan. Sofia and Gregory lived in Israel for several years, and were finally able to move to the US to be with Gregory's sister, Yana, who had moved here earlier with her husband. Gregory and Yana's last name is Smelyansky. Yana is married to Rafael Galperin, and they have a son, Daniel Galperin, currently a PhD student in Columbia University.

In 2020, Sofia, Yana and Gregory met my sister, Marcy, my brother, Gill, and me in person at my grandfather's gravesite in

Glenolden for the first time (outside because of the pandemic). Howard quietly cleaned Baruch's headstone in the cemetery while we all chatted excitedly. We instantly became family. We were immediately amazed to see how much Sofia looked like our dear Aunt Jody (Rose) and even had the same sense of style. In the photo below, that's Sofia on the left in her early 80s, Jody on the right in her early 70s.



Our newly found relatives also gave us a wonderful gift—a photograph of our grandfather and his siblings with their mother. Our grandfather was the eldest child (second from right) and Gregory and Yana's grandfather (Grisha) was the youngest child—seated near his foot. The photograph had been handed down to them from their grandfather and can now be handed down in our families, too.



We have been meeting regularly on Zoom and in person ever since. My father died several years ago, so sadly, the first cousins (my father, Willy, and Sofia) never met. But in my sister's backyard following the cemetery gathering, with tears of gratitude, we sang a song in Hebrew (*Hinay Ma Tov*) together.

FINDING FAMILY (continued)

We learned that we also have segments of this family in Moscow and in Haifa, Israel, and have since touched base with the group in Israel on Zoom, with plans one day to meet in person. Gregory continues to unravel the genetic trail and has written much in Russian about our families.

People give up so much when they have to leave family behind. My grandfather never saw his parents and siblings again, and my father never got the chance to know the lovely people in his extended family. But thanks to modern technology and the hope of a future that draws people to search for a better life, after 106 years, our family has now been blessed to reunite.

Picture from the day of our first meeting and backyard meal during the early days of the COVID pandemic. From left: Gregory, Yana, Sofia, Gill, Marcy, Yona.



GREETINGS FROM HAZAK

by Helen Feinberg and Coleman Poses, Co-Chairs

HAZAK celebrated the arrival of spring with our annual HAZAK Shabbat, held Saturday, April 29. We were able to return to the gracious, spacious Charry Sanctuary, where our members, with the leadership of Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti, led services, read Torah and Haftarah, and engaged in discussion of the Torah portion. We were fortunate to have Donna Cooper, Executive Director of Children First (formerly Public Citizens for Children and Youth, speak with us about the current status of Fair Funding for Pennsylvania's Public Schools. We also enjoyed a delicious kiddush lunch provided by Centre Catering...a worthy celebration of the year.

On Tuesday evening, May 2—in the Canteen Room—HAZAK will be showing "The Adventures of Prince Achmed," a film from 1926, created from animated paper cuts. Our resident paper-cutting expert, Mindy Shapiro, will facilitate the discussion. All are welcome.

The HAZAK Book Group continues to read and talk about...just about everything. In March we read *Crying in H Mart* by Michele Zauner. To prepare, Naomi Klayman suggested an outing to H Mart in Cheltenham, which features strongly in the novel. There was a visit to H Mart, and a subsequent lunch at Jong Ka Jib in Cheltenham, facilitated by Ruth Loew.

In April we discussed A. B. Yehoshua's *A Journey to the End of the Millennium*. The selections for the next few months are:

May 11

The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion

June 8

The Mapmaker's Daughter by Clare Marchant

July 13

Horse by Geraldine Brooks

August 10

White Noise by Dom deLillo

The Book Group meets outside, in person, whenever the weather permits, and by Zoom when it doesn't. We meet on the second Thursday of each month, 2:30-4:00 PM. Contact Coleman Poses at cposes1@gmail.com if you would like to be added to the book group list.

Finally, congratulations to HAZAK members Debbie Weinstein and Dick Goldberg, on the birth of grandson Zuriel to their daughter Rosa!

DID YOU KNOW?

HAZAK programs are planned for those age 55+, and are geared to reflect both common interests and get us to "stretch" to try new activities as well. Our well-attended book group meets monthly all year long. HAZAK also sponsors book talks by local authors, as well as speakers on topics of particular importance to our interests, and several times a year we show great films. We also take day trips to cultural and natural sites in the area, often to places members have never been. HAZAK is for all of us to stay connected to GJC and to each other: to venture out and experience parts of our city we haven't seen before, to read, learn and talk together, to keep us strong. We hope you will join us. Membership is \$10/year.



by Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti

Upcoming Learning at Koleinu Beit Midrash

Don't miss these new and ongoing learning opportunities in May!
We study Pirkei Avot on Shabbat afternoons, and we're planning a late-night study session for Tikkun Leyl Shavuot on the night of May 25.

Pirkei Avot study Shabbat afternoons at **4:00 PM, April 15 through May 20**, in person in the tent at GJC. Please join us to study some of Judaism's most compelling ethical texts and discuss their implications for our lives today. All texts will be available in English. Open to all!

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot will be the evening of **May 25 at GJC**, with online options. We are thrilled that for the first time in many years, we will study and pray together with our sibling congregations in Northwest Philadelphia, P'nai Or and Mishkan Shalom. Come join us to celebrate Shavuot with a fascinating evening of learning and connecting!
Details will be on the website and in the GJC weekly.

**Thinking and Learning with Emmanuel Lévinas:
Judaism, Ethics, and the Commanded Covenant of Compassion,**
with **Gary Goldberg** on **Mondays at 7:00 PM, April 17 through May 22** on Zoom. The French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas proposed that "ethics is first philosophy" and is thus the source of meaning and intelligibility of life.
Register Here: <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/levinas/>

God is Here, book talk with **Rabbi Toba Spitzer, May 16, 7:00 PM** on Zoom.
How can we experience holiness in our daily lives?
Which ancient metaphors for the Divine can resonate with us today?
Register Here: <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/god-is-here-book-talk/>

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We want to hear your ideas!

We are already beginning to plan our classes for next year 2023-24!
If you have ideas for future classes at Koleinu Beit Midrash—whether a subject you'd like to learn and/or a subject you'd like to teach—please reach out to Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti at studentrabbi@germantownjewishcentre.org



RECONSTRUCTIONISM: A PRIMER

by George Stern, Coordinator of the Minyan Dorshei Derekh Mazkirut

Who doesn't like a party? Minyan Dorshei Derekh will be celebrating its 36th Anniversary at Shabbat services on June 4. This is your invitation to join us. Here's what you'd be celebrating, at a joyous service and lunch.

When Debbie and I told our friends that we'd joined a Reconstructionist *minyan* (prayer group), many looked at us quizzically and asked, "What's Reconstructionism?" I'd defer to Debbie, whose job as Library Director of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical School (RRC) had brought us to Philadelphia.

Here is a succinct answer from a booklet called "What a Reconstructionist Approach Offers."

"We approach Judaism—and life—with deep reverence for the past and a passion to relate it to the present. In a rapidly changing world, Reconstructionist communities share and create new ways of being Jewish to connect us to the divine and ensure our lives are filled with purpose. We view Judaism as the evolving civilization of the Jewish people in an ongoing relationship with God."

"Dorshei Derekh" means "Seekers of a Way"—not *THE* way, but rather *A* way. Each of us treads our own path, but in community with and therefore with the support of one another. On the Dorshei Derekh website (<http://www.minyandorsheiderekh.org/>) are listed our "Core Values"—lay leadership, vibrant participatory services, critical and creative engagement with Torah and liturgy, theological diversity, mutual aid/caring for one another, feminist innovation, LGBTQ inclusion, anti-racist learning and practice, intergenerational community, and inclusion of those who have been historically marginalized in Jewish communities.

Without a doubt, *Tikkun Olam* (Repairing the World) plays a major role in determining Dorshei activities. We adopted the Reconstructionist *siddur* (prayerbook) and *machzor* (High Holy Days prayerbook) because of how effectively they interweave ancient texts with contemporary sensibilities. For more than three years we've engaged in intentional antiracism work, including a monthly *d'var Torah* (talk based on the Torah portion) with an antiracism/anti-oppression theme. We created a Welcoming Guide to help our members know how best to approach new people in our midst. Each year we donate funds to various Jewish and non-Jewish causes, as well as to GJC itself. Our Tikkun Olam work enshrines the connection between our values and real-world practices.

Membership in Dorshei Derekh provides myriad ways for involvement. Every Shabbat three to four dozen of us, drawn by our appreciation for community, gather for two hours of vibrant and creative prayers, singing, and learning—followed, of course, by eating. On a typical Shabbat one of us leads the *davening* (praying), one gives a *d'var Torah* and then leads a discussion with the group as a whole or in breakouts; three folks *leyn* (chant) from the Torah; three individuals or groups are called for *aliyot* (the prayers before and after each segment of the Torah reading), two volunteers lift and bind the scroll (*hagbah and gelilah*) after the reading, an individual or family sponsors a *kiddush* (home-made and store-bought dairy and *pareve* delectable foods), while another individual or family helps us fulfill our environmental responsibilities by taking care of washing the dishes. (We don't use disposables; we even have little compostable cups for kiddush.) Volunteer coordinators make sure all of these "slots" operate seamlessly. Other volunteers coordinate High Holy Days services and programming, as well as ad hoc activities. Everyone has a chance to give input and suggest new initiatives at our Quarterly Meetings.

As for the services themselves, volunteer leaders bring a wide variety of talents and approaches. Some lean into traditional *nusach* (set musical modes), some teach us new melodies (with or without drums or other non-acoustic instruments), some bring in evocative English readings. *Divrei Torah* presenters approach the text from many different angles.

The Dorshei Mazkirut (steering committee) that I have the honor to head this year mirrors the basic demographics of GJC as a whole. I am a retired rabbi who led a congregation and several community-based nonprofits. We joined Dorshei in 2002. Mike Gross, proud father of twins about to become B'not Mitzvah and a Dorshei member for even longer, trained as a community organizer and is currently Development Director at Drexel Hillel. Debbie Weinstein practiced employment law, which she also taught at Wharton. She and her husband were years ago members of the precursor to Or Hadash and joined GJC and Dorshei only two years ago.

When I was in rabbinic school, I wrote a paper on Mordecai Kaplan, founder of Reconstructionism. Now I've come to appreciate even more his vision for American Judaism. If you join us at our June 4 Celebration, you'll get to know more about what make us tick—without the burden of writing a paper.

WELCOMING THE BUSES: Refugee and Immigrant Justice Program

by Margaret Shapiro, Tikkun Olam



On Sunday morning, March 12, the Refugee and Immigrant Justice Initiative, led by Joyce Lieberman and Seth Lieberman offered a program for Refugee Shabbat. It featured talks from Amy Eusebio Executive Director of the Philadelphia Office of Immigrant Affairs and Blanca Pacheco, co-director of the New Sanctuary

Movement. Thirty five GJC members participated in this engaging discussion about welcoming busloads of refugees to Philadelphia from the southern border. We learned interesting statistics and commentary about the contributions of immigrants to the civic, economic and cultural life of Philadelphia.

Amy spoke about how Philly gained 80,000 residents in the census of 2020, which included many immigrants: fifteen percent—280,000 people—in Philadelphia, are foreign born and 20% of families in the city include a foreign-born person.

She also talked about how carefully and thoroughly the city welcomes refugees and immigrants—especially the ones sent on buses from Texas—who decided to make Philadelphia their home. Others connected to subsequent buses to meet friends or relatives in other cities. Dr. Cheryl Bettigole, well known to us, and also the Philadelphia Commissioner of Health, met every bus to welcome the immigrants and scan every passenger for any health problems. Amy stated, “we led with our values, offering bi-lingual welcome, and with much cooperation from housing, education, legal, employment and medical organizations.” The last bus arrived in January. Blanca also talked about advocacy and how volunteers can be helpful, particularly in accompanying people to court or finding resources such as jobs, housing, and medical care. Legal advice is also frequently requested.

“The City of Philadelphia is proud to announce that it has been officially designated a certified welcoming city by *Welcoming America*. This formal designation recognizes cities that have created policies and programs reflecting their values and commitment to immigrant inclusion.

Philadelphia is the fourth City in the Commonwealth and the largest City in the nation to gain certification. Currently, only 18 cities and counties across the country have been named Certified Welcoming.” (*City of Philadelphia, Office of Immigrant Affairs website*)

In addition, the Office of Immigrant Affairs website prioritizes Philadelphia’s commitment to integrating and helping immigrants in pragmatic and sensitive ways:

From the website:

WHAT MAKES PHILADELPHIA WELCOMING

The City of Philadelphia earned a high score for accomplishing the following:

- Commitment to creating a more equitable and navigable justice system which is reflected through the work of the *Immigration Counsel* at the District Attorney’s office and their partnership with the Pennsylvania Immigrant Family Unity Project to create pathways for representation for cases involving immigration and housing
- Launching immigrant-inclusive citywide initiatives such as the *Domestic Worker Bill of Rights*; the *Pay Equity Ordinance*; various education programs through the Office of Children and Families and the School District; community engagement strategies implemented by Philly Counts to ensure fair elections and an accurate Census, *Language Access Philly*, and many other programs that improve access to city services and resources for immigrant communities
- Having strong partnerships and an extensive network of organizations working on immigrant inclusion. These connections have made welcoming new arrivals fleeing violence in *Afghanistan, Haiti, Ukraine, and Latin America* possible.

We can support the work of the Department of Immigrant Affairs and the New Sanctuary Movement and can be proud of our city government.

Below are ways to help refugees and asylum seekers that Amy and Blanca added to the Zoom Chat:

- <https://www.phila.gov/2022-11-15-how-you-can-help-people-seeking-asylum-arriving-in-philadelphia/>
- Contribute to the Philadelphia Welcoming Fund <https://philacityfund.org/programs/philadelphia-welcoming-fund/>
- Learn more about our Certified Welcoming designation! <https://www.phila.gov/2023-02-09-city-of-philadelphia-earns-certified-welcoming-designation/>
- Learn more about language services offered in Philadelphia <https://www.phila.gov/2022-12-12-what-services-were-provided-to-multilingual-residents-last-year/>

WELCOMING THE BUSES (continued)

- We Co-lead a Statewide coalition - Driving PA Forward. Here is a way to support. <https://givebutter.com/driverlicensesforallpa/drivingpaforward>
- Sign up for the GJCTikkun Olam Refugee Group listserv for updates; email Seth Lieberman at s.lieberma@aim.com
- You may want to sign up to lobby elected officials for better US Policies for accepting refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants; email Seth Lieberman.

BNOT MITZVAH IN JUNE

*Eliana and Kayla Kelberg-Gross are the daughters of Mike Gross and Penina Kelberg:
Their Bnot Mitzvah will be celebrated on June 17.*

Kayla



I'm in 7th grade at Julia R. Masterman Middle School. The thing that excites me the most about having a Bat Mitzvah is having a way to share some of the things I have learned over the years.

My *parashah* is *Sh'lach L'cha* and it's about Moses sending spies into the Promised Land. When the spies come back with what they saw, the Israelites panic and wish they could be back in Egypt. The most interesting thing about the Torah portion is how some of the spies come back with bad news and some come back with

good news, even though they have seen the same thing.

My Hebrew name is *Kayla Lila*. Kayla means crown and Lila means night. Kayla was named after my paternal Great Grandmother Carol. Lila was named after my maternal Great Grandfather Louis. They were both strong people who held their families closely.

One thing in the world I would like to see change is the amount of inequality there is between different groups of people. The world has come so far but we still have many things to get done in order to become a kinder world.

Eliana

Hi! My name is Eliana Kelberg-Gross. I go to Julia R. Masterman Middle school.

In Hebrew, my name is Eliana, meaning, "God has answered me." My mom loves the name Eliana, and I am named after my Great Grandmother, Eileen, on my mom's side. She was intelligent, caring, and fun, all words that you could use to describe me. My middle name, Bella, is named after my paternal Great Grandmother Blanche.

In my opinion the most interesting thing in my Torah portion, *Sh'lach L'cha*, would be that when one person from each tribe goes to the new land of Canaan, ten of the people say that they are like grasshoppers compared to the people there, but two say that they can go in because God is on their side. So why would so many people believe the negative aspect? Why not be positive?

One thing in the world I would like to see change is less or no gun violence, because it affects the world around us daily in a horrific way.



A VERY DIFFERENT NIGHT

by Meryl Bonderow

During Passover this year, we pondered the question of “Why this night is different from all other nights.” We spoke of leavened versus unleavened, dipping or no dipping, reclining or sitting straight in our chairs. But sometimes, a “different night” can adjust our perception of sameness, perhaps for years to come. We had such a night, in November of 2022.



The Bonderow Family: Togo, Noa, Meryl, and Emi

The evening of the 30th was absolutely mundane. We had made Trader Joe’s Indian meals and were settling in to eat. Our daughter, Noa, was in her room under the premise of doing homework, but more likely playing games on her phone. I called her down to join us.

At the table, there was sameness: eating, making sure the cats didn’t jump for food, small talk or no talk. Noa suddenly smacked the left side of her head, hard. “My head hurts so bad I want to bash it against the wall.”

I said, “Noa, is it a headache? Should I bring you some Tylenol?” After a moment, she uttered these words—and I shall never forget them: “Tylenol. Me. Want.” I responded, “Noa, cut that out! Should I bring you some Tylenol?” No further response.

Noa has always been an interesting kid. An extraordinary artist, very quiet, but frequently silly or goofy, particularly with her twin, Emi. At that moment I believed she was yanking my chain...until I didn’t.

She looked at me and said, “Tylenol. I. Need.” I brought the Tylenol but by then she was completely slumped in her seat. My husband Togo then said, “I think something’s really wrong. Noa, can you walk?” She stood up, and we watched in horror as her knees buckled and she fell to the floor. We knew she was not joking and that we needed to get her to the hospital.

She’d spilled her palak paneer on her sweater so I tried to change her top. Her right arm had no life in it. It flopped as though unattached to her body. Then, and only then, did she begin to struggle and cry. I will never forget the look on her face—one of impossible fear.

We decided to forego an ambulance and take her directly to CHOP in the car. Togo had to carry her down the walk and I wondered what the neighbors would think, if they saw us. I sat with her in the backseat with my arm around her. She was not moving.

Once at the ER, we found a wheelchair and pushed her in. Upon reflection, I felt like we were in a medical drama, running past the other sick kids and their parents, saying, “This is an EMERGENCY!” I’m sure we annoyed some people as the medical staff waved us in first. Within moments of Noa being placed on the bed, the doctors were using the word “stroke.” There was

absolutely zero doubt, and she had effectively made it to CHOP just in time. The thought that we might have been too late still sends shudders through my being.

The staff had to remove Noa’s braces to administer an MRI. She looked so vulnerable, her small form shaking uncontrollably... trying to talk but failing. The stroke was rapidly confirmed. One of the doctors told us there was a large bleed—what they call an AVM (arteriovenous malformation, or tangle of open blood vessels)—in the left side of the brain, causing her to lose control of the right side of her body.

Noa spent a week in the PICU—the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit—in a room where the lights were continuously dim, but glowed an odd red at nighttime. She lay in her bed, in and out of sleep, waking only to be moved downstairs for what felt like hundreds of scans. Interns, doctors, and nurses woke her hourly to hit her right leg with a hammer, to ask her name, her city, her state, the year, and where she was. Noa’s responses were garbled and, well, not correct. She insisted her name was Emi, almost to the point of tears. How hard it was to be “brave” then; when all I wanted to do was cry.

One morning we were visited by Dr. Chen, a vascular-neurosurgeon, someone whose job was to perform the most delicate procedures possible: gently approaching the part of the brain where the AVM was—tangled and bleeding—and attempting to stop the bleeding and remove the embolism. This surgery, known as a craniotomy, was on the table for Noa. Earlier attempts to reach the blood clot via a thin tube inserted through her hip and stretching to her skull—an angiogram—had been unsuccessful. Thus, Dr. Chen would remove a piece of Noa’s skull and address the bleed directly. She warned us that Noa could undergo the procedure, and never be better than she was at that moment, or she could regain her faculties. The decision to go forward was an unbearable one, but we already knew this surgery would be inevitable.

At this particular moment, Rabbi Zeff came to see Noa, and essentially sat with us and talked while she rested. Towards the

A VERY DIFFERENT NIGHT (continued)

end of his visit he recited the "*Mi Shebeirach*" for Noa, and with abundant kindness, also prayed for the well-being of the medical team. Rabbi Zeff understood what a challenge we were facing. Would Noa be able to attend school? Live a fulfilling life? Laugh? Drive? Make art? There were so many questions and doubts. On my behalf, he counseled me to let go of the guilt I'd felt for not taking Noa seriously at the moment she was stricken. This had been preying on me, and I had to leave it behind.

Prior to surgery Noa was already "improving" in small ways. She was beginning to regain some speech, though her right arm and leg were still essentially paralyzed. She had little control over the drooping side of her mouth, and she drooled frequently without awareness. We continuously reassured her that it was okay—all of it. All of it was okay.

She'd taken to expressing herself through single words and gestures. After the neurology team explained that there had been no way of knowing she'd have a stroke, Noa explained it to me by pointing to her head and saying, "Random." She referred to her phone as "tap tap." She still couldn't identify most objects by name. There was the surreal sense that she had returned to toddlerhood. As I had done when she was two, I would point to something and ask her, "Noa, what is this?" "Window?" "Door?" "Chair?" Most of the time she simply gave me a crooked smile and remained quiet.

When the day of her brain surgery arrived she was stoic but Togo, Emi, and I were a mess. We sat with Noa until they put her under. We recited "*Refuah Shelema*" quietly, and then we left her side. After surgery Dr. Chen delivered the news that she had been able to remove the embolism—the clot—from Noa's brain, thus relieving the pressure and allowing the tumult along the Sylvian Fissure to quieten. It had been successful, but her next weeks and months would tell the bigger story.

Post-surgery, Noa was once again placed in the PICU, where the eerie red glow returned after dark. We went to her room the following morning and I had to stifle my gasp. Noa appeared propped up in bed with a quarter of her hair shaved, revealing a series of stitches so red and large it seemed like a caricature. Atop her head was a drain-bag, almost full, collecting fluids and blood from her brain...but she smiled at us.

From that moment, Noa began to talk, first slowly, and slushy with saliva, but progressively more clearly as her mouth-droop began to righten. Dr. Chen marveled at her progress. The surgery had clearly begun to bring Noa back, and I had no qualms about thanking Dr. Chen with unbridled emotion. (Dr. Shih-Shah Lang Chen, if you're reading this, you're our hero!)

Walking returned more slowly. Noa began physical therapy only days after her procedure. The team's main goal was to get her out of bed, moving, and using the toilet—with assistance. The

day she "did her business" in the bathroom—rather than in her diaper—was loudly celebrated, much to Noa's horror. She began to take steps, first with her therapists holding her body, then alone, with a walker. I have a photo of her and her favorite therapist walking down the hall of the Neurology Unit, Noa holding on to a walker. I called her a "Little Bubbe," another Mom-Joke she didn't particularly care for.

For all the despair that children spend too much time on their devices, Noa's iPhone played its own role in her recovery. She and Emi had been in the middle of some sort of video-game "contest" when disaster had struck. As Noa became more lucid, Emi would talk to her about the game, the contest, the characters. Noa, enthusiastic, would attempt to speak, indicating she wanted her "tap tap." With left hand only, she began to find the keys and to type words; a jumble at first, then a few more correctly.

Using her right hand was a trial. The team insisted that for each three left-hand keystrokes or forkfuls of food, she should switch to her right. "Right hand, Noa!" was a ceaseless mantra. She still had little feeling there, and she preferred to let that hand dangle. Staff would come in for the sole purpose of tickling her right foot and arm. "Did you feel that?" Her usual answer of "not really" eventually became "a little," and finally, "uh, yeah?" as the nerves began to regenerate.

Soon Noa was transferred over to the Seashore House for formal rehabilitation. She had been in the PICU and Neurology for about three weeks at that point. To us, it felt like a huge step up, a graduation. There was lots of hope in our hearts and minds on the day we left 9 South, Main Building.

At Seashore, Noa would have a roommate. We were delighted to learn that she was to be a Jewish teen from Central New Jersey, with a wonderfully kind family. Hanukkah was fast approaching and our neighbors invited us to "light" (electric bulbs—no candles in the hospital!) their menorah in the common room. We were also visited by the group Chai Lifeline, whose leader, Naomi, assured us that they'd "hook us up" with the best Hanukkah one could have in the hospital. She brought gifts for Noa and we wheeled her down to CHOP's Atrium, where the Jewish community sang songs and "lit" the main Hanukiyah. CHOP has an incredible Jewish presence, as a matter of fact. It was very comforting.

The weeks went by. Noa's roommate was discharged and a new young patient took her place. Noa had begun to take walker-free short strolls around the floor, and, on one momentous day, walked all the way from Seashore through the circuitous floors of the CHOP megalopolis, to the food court in the Main Building. I was exhausted! Noa claimed... she was not.

On January 13—forty-five days since that night in the ER—Noa was discharged from CHOP. The nurses and therapists came in to say goodbye. They presented her with a huge personalized

A VERY DIFFERENT NIGHT (continued)

poster, signed by everyone. Noa, being Noa, was embarrassed by the attention. To me, that was a sign she was returning to herself.

Walking through those halls for the last time, across the bridge connecting the buildings, past the various units, down the three elevators to the parking garage... felt odd. I was faint with gratitude that Noa had survived this cataclysm and, with weeks of continued outpatient rehab, would—*Baruch HaShem*—thrive and be her best self. But this place had become something of a second home, and those within the walls had worked miracles. We will be forever grateful.

We will also be eternally grateful for our GJC community. The prayers, the words of support and encouragement, the food donations—have meant EVERYTHING to our family. Feeling “not alone” is absolutely vital to those going through

a tumultuous event. We were most definitely not alone. The Barrack kids from Noa’s ninth-grade class—and their parents—provided her with cards, pictures, texts, and, of course, more food. We have found true friends among folks who had heretofore just been names on WhatsApp.

As Noa returned to school full time, finally, on March 13—two months after her release from CHOP—a certain loop closed. Our “different night” had become the “same night,” for reasons we’d never deemed possible. Now we have a new type of reality, one of hope, trust, prayer, and the belief in survival.

PS: We kept Noa’s barely touched plate of Trader Joe’s Palak Paneer in the back of our fridge for the duration of her hospitalization. For reasons only known to those undergoing a crisis, we couldn’t part with it. We finally tossed it in the garbage on the evening of Noa’s discharge.

Torah Fund Brunch

Supporting The Women’s League of Conservative Judaism
“Chazak v’Ematz - Be Strong and Courageous”

May 7, 11:00 at the home of
Diane Ajl and Neil Kitrosser

Join us in honoring Linda Gherkas



Speakers:

Rabbi Ellen Wolintz-Fields, Executive Director, WLCJ
and Julia Loeb, Incoming International President, WLCJ



Support Torah Fund With E-Cards at
torahfundecards.jtsa.edu



THE WOMEN OF GJC

by Nan Daniels, Co-President

By the time this article reaches you, I will be nearing the end of my second year as co-president of WGJC. This has been a second act for me, as some of you will recall that I served as president of Women's Club back in the 1990s. It reminds me of the old saying "the more things change, the more they stay the same." There are many things about WGJC that have remained unchanged; however, much has changed and we work hard to stay current and relevant and an integral part of the fabric of GJC.

By now we will have wrapped up two of our most special events, Women's Shabbat, on March 25, and Torah Fund Brunch, on May 2. Our guest speaker for Women's Shabbat, Centre member Esther Wiesner, spoke of her work with the non-profit organization Rebuilding Philadelphia Together. This note-worthy organization was featured in the Philadelphia Inquirer less than two weeks before Esther served as our speaker for Women's Shabbat.

Our Torah Fund Brunch honored WGJC past president Linda Cherkas. We thank Linda for her service and also thank Diane Aji and Neil Kitrosser for graciously allowing us into their home for this very special day. Kudos to Marilyn Silberstein for coordinating this lovely event.

WGJC will be looking forward to Installation, which is set for June 4, at which time a new—but not always different—set of officers and board members will assume their responsibilities. These three events are a part of our tradition.

We've also added new endeavors to our calendar this year: We've organized two events at the Arden Theater, designed to appeal to our children and grandchildren. We co-sponsored the first

Reproductive Rights Shabbat in February, and many WGJC members participated in the service. WGJC members assisted at this year's Purim Carnival. We're arranging for a series of mahjong lessons as one of our small-group special activities. We continue to brainstorm ways to engage more and younger members.

I have always felt that, with regard to what we do as Women's Club or WGJC, that one person may hold the title, but all of us pitch in to do the work that is needed. In my second act as a leader of WGJC—a few years older, perhaps a little wiser—I am happy to be a part of this community of women, and grateful for the network of support that it provides.



Getting together to set and decorate tables for Women's Shabbat luncheon: Joan Silver, Vilma Lieberman, Debbie Fishman, Dena Lake, Connie Katz, Donna Tartasky, Paul Savedow, Judy Schwartz

Photo by Nan Daniels



Women of GJC Weekday Walking Group

by Linda Feder

Spring is here, and our walking group is still going strong! We've kept it up through two winters, and we're hoping to see some new (and old) faces as the weather warms.

The Weekday Walk is an activity of the Women of GJC, but anyone is welcome. Please feel free to bring your leashed dogs, or children in strollers. For now, we're walking on either Wednesday or Thursday afternoon, at 1 PM, meeting in front of The Cedars House (on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave.). If you're interested in walking, please contact Linda Feder (lindarippsfeder@gmail.com) or Lori Feldman (lorifeldman54@gmail.com).

MEN'S CLUB

by Jim Meyer, President

Since my last article, the Board of the Men's Club decided to remove "Acting" from my "Acting President" title. I now serve as President until June 2024.

I have large shoes to fill. Dick Menin served as Men's Club President for many years. I thought it appropriate to ask Dick to reflect on his Presidency, and the following is a lightly edited version of his responses to my questions. We all wish Dick a *refuah shlema* as he recovers from a medical emergency.

* * * * *

Barbara and I joined GJC in 1996 shortly after her conversion. We were looking exclusively at suburban *shuls*. Barb's sponsoring rabbi, a patient of mine, suggested we try GJC. Although he was not a member, he was a good friend of Carol and Marty Kaplan's and knew about GJC. It clearly had a different *ruach* which appealed to us. An hour long conversation after Friday night services with Mitch Marcus cemented the deal.

I went to my first Men's Club (MC) meeting soon after joining. It was free—who could resist that! The meeting was at the old Goat Hollow restaurant. The only person familiar to me was Berel Sternthal. Why did I return? I frankly can't point to anything in particular. I looked at the organization then, as I do now, as a potential fellowship site where I could meet people interested in Judaism and GJC. I did not have a mentor or even friend there but I was intrigued at the likelihood of meeting fellow participants.

I am a natural "volunteer-er" and tried to add my two cents in meetings. Look where it got me! In 2000, after four years, Milton

Shils z"l came over to me and said, "You are the new president." Saying "no" to Milton was impossible.

At the time, MC put together the annual GJC directory and solicited ads. It was supposed to be distributed at High Holidays but was frequently delayed to the secular New Year or even beyond. It was stressful but it served an important purpose for me. I enjoyed working with and getting to know the MC committee members as well as the GJC office staff.

When I became president, I sought a project that would bring a new purpose to the organization. Harold Arnold talked to me about the large Hanukiyah in Center City. I wondered if we could replicate that at GJC. We developed a cadre of Harold, Hy Zerkowitz and Tim Daniels z'l as the designers and constructors and David Kraut as the fund raiser. For years the original group put it up until an expanded group developed. Twenty-two years later, I consider the GJC Hanukiyah my most tangible accomplishment.

However, my primary goal for MC was and remained fostering a sense of fellowship in the organization.

The most challenging aspect of having led the MC was finding programs and developing membership across all communities at GJC. Now, people have other outlets competing for their volunteer energy. I hope to support Jim and future presidents in their efforts to attract members and volunteers from all communities in and outside of GJC.

LGBTQ PRIDE @ GJC
Come as you are.

PRIDE SHABBAT JOINT SERVICE
Saturday, June 10
9:30 AM

FRIDAY NIGHT PRIDE!
Friday, June 9
5:30-8:00 PM

Festival Booths
Sh'BBQ & Potluck
Chana Rothman
& Friends
Drag Queen
Eric Jaffe
and more!

GJC YOUTH AND FAMILIES

by Abby Weinberg, Director of Youth and Families

What is Germantown Jewish Centre to me?

exciting religion communal
 fun think teachers community
 safety friend friends jewish
 praying community peace culture
 learn pray place synagogue
 kehillah congregation



PURIM FUN FOR ALL!

This year's GJC Purim Carnival brought our wonderfully costumed and enthusiastic Youth and Families together for a great time once again! Many games were played, balloons popped, prizes won and candy consumed, all thanks to our incredible parent and teen volunteers.

THANK YOU to the following people who made the Purim Carnival happen this year:

SUPER-VOLUNTEERS

Maani Waldor – Queen & Chairwoman of the Purim Carnival!
 Justin Stuhltrager & Ali Stumacher – Awesome On-Site Coordinators
 Della Lazarus – Food Maven
 Jeanne Calloway & Leah Corsover – Keepers of the Cash & Ticket Sales

DAY-OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Abby Horn	Amy Schragar	Esther Wiesner	Mark Fallon
Abby Orenstein	Anna Goldberg	Ivan Wolnek	Melissa Gartenberg Livney
Adina Klem	Anna Morin	Jimmy Rotenberg	Mike Gross
Alex Molot	Bill McDevitt	Jon Rossos	Miriam Von Essen
Alisa Kamis-Brinda	David Kanthor	Josh Peskin	Rachel Marks
Alisa Kraut	Dina Pinsky	Linda Feder	Rebecca Kraut
Amy Ignatow	Eric DeHaven	Maria Pulzetti	

DAY-OF TEEN VOLUNTEERS

Jared Nachimson	Lia Taylor	Oliver Kraut	Theo Molot
Koby Fallon	Lily Wolnek	Orin Rossos	Toby Kessler-Cohen
Levanah Cohen	Mikaela Kessler	Sadie Wade	Toby Barkan Schragar



Photos by Erich DeHaven

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM: Black History at ECP

by Aliya Hart, Pre-K Teacher and Diversity Curriculum Coordinator at ECP

"Potato chip! That's from a Black inventor!" A child yells out excitedly during lunch. The excitement continues on the walk down the hallway to the bathroom. "Door knob!" "Door stop!" "Look, a fire extinguisher!" "Baby buggy!" "There's a mailbox!"

For Black History Month at ECP, we wanted to do a lot of fun activities where children learned about scientists and inventors, listened to different music genres, and learned about Black History, all while having fun.

At the end of the month, ECP had a school-wide Black History Dress-Up Day where children and staff dressed up as people such as Ruby Bridges, Serena Williams, Charlie Parker, Jesse Owens and Josephine Baker.

"I want to be an astronaut like Ronald McNair or Mae Jemison when I get bigger." "I want to be an inventor." Looks like this important theme was a success!

Photos by Aliya Hart

Some classes at ECP went on a Scavenger Hunt to search for inventions created by Black inventors. All the classes from the Infant room to the Pre-K room looked for inventions. There were inventions all over the classrooms such as: pencil sharpeners, a thermostat controller and an air conditioning unit.

The older classes searched for inventions in the school and around the synagogue. Classes even walked down the street to take pictures near the traffic light to see Garrett Morgan's invention.



SPRING is here and we look forward to seeing you at THE LITTLE SHOP!

We are your one stop shop for all gift needs for yourself and others. We have wonderful gifts for **Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduations, weddings, anniversaries, and birthdays**, as well as beautiful hostess gifts, Judaica, books, toys, candles, and **so much more**. Check out our inventory of jewelry, scarves, wine (20+ varieties), serving ware and so much more for adults and children of all ages and at all price points.

SPRING & SUMMER STORE HOURS

May through June 9th:

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: 11 AM - 5 PM • Sunday: 9 AM - 12:30 PM

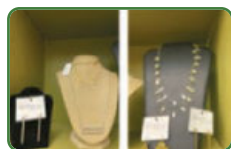
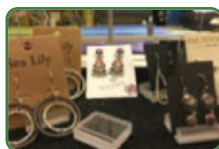
June 11th through August:

Wednesday and Friday: 11 AM - 5 PM

*** Monthly Specials ***

MAY 20% discount on all jewelry !!!!

JUNE 20% discount on all cheese and challah boards !!!!



Customer service is our priority. **FREE** gift wrapping upon request. Payment by cash, check and credit card accepted.

YOU PERFORM A MITZVAH when buying at The Little Shop: 50% of your purchases at The Little Shop go right back to support all of GJC's wonderful programs.

HOUSE & DESIGN COMMITTEE

by Sherman Aronson, Steve Levin, Susan Pardys and Leslie Pontz

Spring is here and soon all the greenery that were planted last summer and fall will be blooming. We are excited to witness the flowering local shrubs in the new front planter and the first season of the new rain gardens in the rear of the building around the newly renovated parking lot.

The rain gardens were paid for by a wonderful gift from the Women of Germantown Jewish Centre (WGJC) as part of their ongoing Building Beautiful program. We are all so grateful for their generosity. Those gardens will surround a future new Sukkah structure, designed by our own Sherman Aronson, and it will be much larger than our existing Sukkah. It is intended to be used not only for the Sukkot holiday, but throughout the year for all kinds of events. Because of its multi-use purpose, it is taking a bit of time to work out all the details, not only because of the religious requirements for a Sukkah, but also because the roof needs to be removable during the holiday each year, and that has been a logistical challenge. But the H&D Committee has kept brainstorming and we are well under way to working it out with a variety of experts, vendors, builders and suppliers. The structure will be a unique, useful and beautiful addition to our community.

As you know from David Mosenkis's lead article in the March Centre Call, the GJC Green Team has been working with the House & Design Committee to move ahead with the solar power and re-roofing project for the GJC School Building. This is an exciting opportunity for the GJC communities to reduce our CO2 emissions and save operating costs every month in the future. We hope to start work in the Fall of 2023 on both the new roof and insulation work, then the installation of the photovoltaic panels.

Meanwhile, our H&D Team, along with Eric Word, has been working with Wachter Engineering for design options to improve the HVAC systems for the Sanctuary Building. This may become a major undertaking in which we replace 70-year-old equipment with state-of-the-art heating and cooling using high efficiency heat pumps and digital control systems. There are still options to review and costs to evaluate, but the goal is a good one, making reliable systems that save energy, reduce waste, and provide more ability to have a variety of events in our spaces.

As of this writing, the masonry restoration work is complete on the Lincoln Drive side of the Sanctuary Building. The upper portions of the granite walls were losing their mortar joints and have been extensively re-pointed. The cast stone copings on the tops of these walls also needed new mortar and caulking, to keep rainwater from penetrating into the stonework. These wall areas are tall parapets and have a great deal of weather exposure. Eric and Sherman worked with Mara Restoration to develop the mortar selection, colors and physical treatment to blend in with the original wall areas, and to serve us another generation or two.

We have been keeping you all in the loop—via these Centre Call articles—to be aware of the new projects and maintenance projects that make our building continue to work and move into the future. It is important to mention that as we think about each of these projects, we also think about accessibility for physically challenged people using our building, so as to be as welcoming and comfortable as possible. These needs are considered in any new upgrades that we may undertake, whether exterior walkways and ramps, audio and technology systems, or interior spaces. Thanks to all for working with us on all these efforts.



Photo shows the missing mortar joints in the stone wall and the capping. In the part closest to the viewer, the tests for different mortar joint colors and finishes are visible.

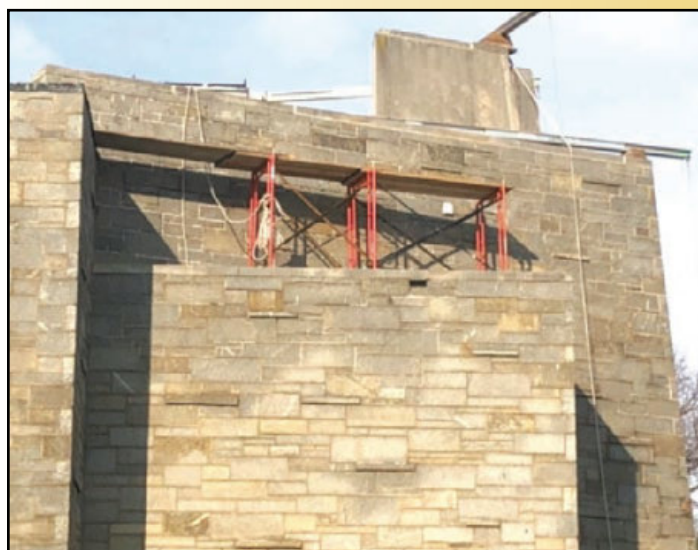


Photo shows the main part of the wall. At the right, the pointing work was completed and the wall area washed.

Photos by Sherman Aronson

GJC IS GOING SOLAR!

Help us meet our fundraising goals and come celebrate in May!



What's happening?

Germantown Jewish Centre is getting solar panels and a new roof to accommodate them!

How can you help?

- Support the solar initiative at a giving level
- Purchase a ticket to the fundraiser concert
- Tell your friends to purchase tickets
- Volunteer

When is the concert?

Sunday, May 21 at 3 PM

Openers:

Early Childhood Program Tots
GJC Youth & Teens

Headliner - G'vanim:

with Rabbi Adam Zeff, Nina Peskin, Dan Berman, Mikael Elsilá, Justin Fink, Sam Kassel, Hoagy Wing, and Elliott Seif

Giving Levels

Life Source.....	\$ 45,000
Root.....	\$ 36,000
Trunk.....	\$ 18,000
Branch	\$ 10,000
Flower.....	\$ 5,400
Leaf.....	\$ 3,600
Bud.....	\$ 1,800

*Contributions of \$3,600 and above will be acknowledged on a permanent display in the GJC Education Building.

**All levels include 4 tickets.



Ticket Sales

Ray of Sunshine.....	\$18
Sunbeam.....	\$54
*includes 2 tickets	
Sunspot.....	\$72
*includes 2 tickets	
Sunburst.....	\$180
*includes 3 tickets	
Solar Flare.....	\$360
*includes 4 tickets	
Bright Star.....	\$540
*includes 4 tickets	

Project Details: <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/solar-initiative>

Campaign Giving Levels: <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/solar>

Ticket Sales: <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/sun-concert>



GJC CELEBRATES PURIM!



Photos by Ellie Seif

TODAH RABBAH!

CONTRIBUTIONS from FEBRUARY 9, 2023–APRIL 5, 2023

Sincere thanks and appreciation to those who remember and honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

FUND	BY	OCCASION
Beck Scholar-in-Residence Fund Bess Schick Memorial Fund	Norman Schwartz	in memory of Hannah Garnick Good, mother
	Dena Lake	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
Camp Scholarships Fund	Debbie & George Stern	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Women of GJC	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Harry Kissileff	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Joan Silver	in memory of Julia Kissileff, mother
	Michael Sivitz	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
Chesed Fund	Lizanne Berger	in memory of Sidney Sivitz, father
		in memory of Joan Marcus Berger, mother
		in memory of Dorothy Jean Walton, friend
Dorshei Derekh	Alan & Joyce Levenson	in memory of Eric Berger, brother
	Jane Century	in memory of Scott Marcus
	Alexandra Volin Avelin	in honor of Ellen Ufberg & Judah Labovitz, on their wedding
Early Childhood Program Fund	Diane Ajl & Neil Kitrosser	in memory of Margaret Friedman, mother
	Rebecca Eckard	in memory of David Wundohl, brother of Barbara Pearson
	Mitchell Hirsch	in memory of Selma Cherkas Snider, mother
	Debbie & George Stern	in memory of Rabbi Philip & Malka Goodman, parents
		in memory of Eileen Mae Lehrer Hirsch, mother
Floral Fund General Fund	Elise Bromberg	in honor of Tamar & Sam Magdovitz, on the birth of their new grandson, Chase Saper Magdovitz
	Marcy & Dan Bacine	in honor of Sylvia Lifschitz & Mitch Hirsch, on the birth of their new granddaughter, Rachel Liora
	Marilyn Barr	in memory of Fortunee Bromberg, mother
	Wendy Horwitz	in honor of Ellen Ufberg & Judah Labovitz, on their wedding
	Geof Margo	in memory of Edward I. Greenstone, father
	Jim & Sandy Meyer	in memory of Melvin Horwitz, father
		in memory of Eli Margo, father
		in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
		in memory of Blanche Baren, grandmother
		in memory of Nancy Bloch, sister of Elizabeth Bloch-Smith
HAZAK Fund	Beth Stearman & Jake Kriger	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
	Denise Wolf & Paul Rudick	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Marilyn Yeamans	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
		in honor of Rabbi Malkah Binah Klein, for her lovely High Holiday service
Israel Affairs Fund	Helen & Michael Feinberg	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
		in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
Kiddush Fund	Yona Diamond Dansky	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Dena Lake	<i>refuah shleimah</i> to Howard Spodek, for a speedy recovery
	Nan Myers	in memory of William Diamond, father
		in memory of Michael Rosenman, brother
		in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
		in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
		in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston

Contributions *continued*

FUND	BY	OCCASION
Koleinu Beit Midrash Fund	Kathy Amrom	in appreciation of Nini Engel & Neil Actor, on their daughter Hannah earning a doctorate in neuroscience
	Rabbi Reba Carmel	in honor of Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti
	Rabbi Fredi Cooper	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
		in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
Library Fund Men's Club	Nancy Fredland	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
	Betsy Richman	in memory of Samuel Berkowitz, father
	Linda Dzuba	in memory of Mae Rosner, mother
	Joyce Eveloff	in memory of Rose Pinkenson, mother
Minyan Masorti Memorial Shabbat Fund	Richard Menin	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
	Wendy Weingarten	in memory of Irvin Menin, uncle
		in memory of Ernest Weingarten, father-in-law
Music Fund		in memory of Rose Weingarten, mother-in-law
	Art & Lynne Ellis	in memory of Robert M. Traub, father
	Wendy Horwitz	in memory of Debbie L. Roach, sister
	Dena Lake	in memory of Ernest Weingarten, father-in-law
	Eve Pinkenson	in memory of Rose Weingarten, mother-in-law
Prayerbook & Ritual Items Fund	Charles & Martha Schleifer	in memory of Robert M. Traub, father
		in memory of Debbie L. Roach, sister
Program Fund Rabbi's Discretionary Fund	Sherman Aronson	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
	Kathy Amrom	in memory of Nancy Bloch, sister of Elizabeth Bloch-Smith
	Alexandra Volin Avelin	in memory of Joan Volin, mother
	Richard Baron	in memory of Margot Baron, mother
	Michael Beer	in honor of Maria Pulzetti
		in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
		in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Andrea Brockman	in memory of Seymour Beer, father
	Sylvia Brodsky	in memory of Sylvia Brockman, mother
		in memory of Samuel Brockman, father
		in memory of Benjamin Brodsky, husband
		in memory of Meyer Brodsky, father-in-law
	Nan Daniels	in memory of Anna Brodsky, mother-in-law
	Joyce Eveloff	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
	Rachel Falkove	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
	David Franklin	in memory of Miriam Blumenthal, mother
	Barbara Pearson	in memory of Michael Masch, husband
Judy Schwartz	in memory of Albert Falkove, uncle	
Judy Schwartz & Jay Seitchik	in memory of Al Franklin, father	
Rabbi Robert Tabak & Ruth Loew	in memory of Morris Balis, grandfather	
	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish	
Sonia Voynow	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin	
	in honor of Rabbi Robert Tabak & Ruth Loew, on their 40th wedding anniversary	
	in appreciation of Rabbi Adam Zeff, for his support this past year	
Kenneth Weiss	in memory of Bernice Weiss, mother	
Women of GJC	in appreciation of Sam Katz, for his Men's Club presentation	

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Religious School Fund	Michael & Shelley Spear	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
Tikkun Olam Fund	Rennie Cohen	in honor of Elaine Dushoff
	Bettyann & David Fellner	in memory of Selma Cherkas Snider, mother of Linda Cherkas
	Bettyann Fellner	in memory of Rose Rosenberg Round, mother
	David Fellner	in memory of Baila Round Shargel, sister
	Dena Lake	in memory of Gabriele Fellner, mother
	Elliott Seif	in memory of Werner Fellner, father
	Hyman Zerkowitz	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
Torah Restoration Fund	Yale Pinkenson	in memory of Benjamin Seif, father
	Eve Pinkenson	in memory of David Zerkowitz, father
	Joan Silver	in memory of Anne Pinkenson, mother
	Rose Beck	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
William Beck Scholarship Fund	Joan Silver	in memory of Regina Spitzer, grandmother
	Rose Beck	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
	Rose Beck	in memory of Joseph Mahon, father
	Rose Beck	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
	Rose Beck	in memory of Mickey Tepper, grandfather of Nina Peskin
Women of GJC	Eve Pinkenson	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
	Michael & Shelley Spear	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
	Donna Tartasky	in honor of Joan W. Stern, for coordinating the Women of GJC luncheon
Youth Activities Fund	Curtis & Leslie Pontz	in memory of Eleanor Levingston, mother of Rabbi Judd Levingston
	Curtis Pontz	in memory of Marcy Fish, wife of David Fish
	Joan W. Stern	in memory of Selma Goodman, aunt
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If you are interested in writing for The Centre Call, we would love to hear your ideas! Please contact Kate Lawn at program@germantownjewishcentre.org. The deadline for every issue is the 1st of the previous month.



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